

Message Text

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SUBJECT: DECEMBER 1 PRESS ROUNDUP

1. BERNARD WEINRAUB REPORTED IN DECEMBER 1 NEW YORK TIMES THAT DEFENSE DEPARTMENT, "WORRIED ABOUT VULNERABILITY OF AMERICAN LAND-BASED MISSILES BECAUSE OF SOVIET MISSILE ADVANCES, HAS BEGUN MAJOR REVIEW OF NATION'S OVER-ALL STRATEGIC POSTURE." WEINRAUB SAID STUDY, WHICH BEGAN FEW WEEKS AGO, IS SCHEDULED TO BE SENT TO CARTER NEXT SUMMER. HE SAID STUDY, INVOLVING MILITARY, CIVILIAN AND INTELLIGENCE BRANCHES OF PENTAGON, CENTERS ON AN ASSESSMENT OF CORNERSTONE OF U.S. STRATEGIC DOCTRINE SINCE 1960S: TRIAD CONCEPT. SENIOR PENTAGON OFFICIAL, ACCORDING TO WEINRAUB, TERMED REVIEW "AN ITEM OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE." WEINRAUB SAID CURRENT ASSESS-
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MENT HAS ITS "ROOTS IN QUESTIONS RAISED THREE YEARS AGO BY THEN DEFENSE SECRETARY JAMES R. SCHLESINGER, WHO SUGGESTED THAT NATION NO LONGER NEEDED THREE INDEPENDENT STRATEGIC LEGS BUT COULD RELY ON COMPLEMENTARY NUCLEAR FORCES." SENIOR PENTAGON OFFICIAL TOLD WEINRAUB "QUESTION IS TO WHAT EXTENT EACH LEG OF TRIAD SERVED AS DETERRENT, WHAT DOES IT BUY YOU IN TERMS OF PROTECTION AND ASSURED DESTRUCTION,

WHAT CAN EACH LEG DO. THIS IS OBVIOUSLY BEING UNDERTAKEN BECAUSE OF CHANGED STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, BECAUSE OF GROWTH OF SOVIET CAPABILITIES." PENTAGON SOURCES, ACCORDING TO WEINRAUB, SAID STUDY WOULD DEAL WITH VARIOUS OPTIONS INVOLVING NEW MOBILE MISSILE. PENTAGON STUDY IS HEADED BY RUSSELL MURRAY, STRATEGIC ANALYST WHO IS ASSISTANT DEFENSE SECRETARY FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS.

2. ROBERT KAISER OF WASHINGTON POST REPORTED THAT "IN AN UNUSUAL POLITICAL GAMBIT," THREE SENATORS WHO ARE EXPECTED TO SUPPORT NEW SALT AGREEMENT HAVE WRITTEN TO CARTER URGING HIM TO STIFFEN THAT PACT BEFORE SUBMITTING IT TO SENATE. LETTER WAS SIGNED BY SENATORS MCINTYRE, CULVER AND BUMPERS, ALL DEMOCRATIC MEMBERS OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE OF ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE. THEY GAVE PRESIDENT LIST OF POINTS ON WHICH THEY SAID NEW AGREEMENT SHOULD BE FIRMED UP "TO STRENGTHEN AGREEMENT AND TO BROADEN SUPPORT FOR RATIFICATION." KAISER OBSERVED THAT "EVEN BEFORE FINAL AGREEMENTS ARE REACHED -- AND OFFICIALS ESTIMATE THAT THEY WON'T BE COMPLETED UNTIL SPRING -- LIKELY SUPPORTERS AND FOES ARE MOBILIZING IN SENATE FOR COMING BATTLE OVER APPROVAL. THIS HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE BY SUCCESSION OF LEAKS ON NEW AGREEMENTS WHICH HAS ALLOWED AN UNPRECEDENTED DEGREE OF PUBLIC COMMENT ON ONGOING SET OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION." KAISER SAID ADMINISTRATION ALREADY HAD BEEN COUNTING ON THESE THREE SENATORS.
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TORS TO SUPPORT NEW SALT TREATY; "PROBABLY CORRECTLY." BUT, HE SAID, AS ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL NOTED, THESE SENATORS "MIGHT BE MORE EFFECTIVE IN COMING SALT DEBATE IF THEY CAN NOW ESTABLISH THAT THEY ARE NOT PATSIES FOR PRESIDENT'S POSITION." SENATORS TOLD CARTER THAT NEW AGREEMENT SHOULD INCLUDE "AS STRINGENT LIMITS AS POSSIBLE" ON IMPROVEMENTS IN SOVIET ROCKET TECHNOLOGY. THEY LISTED SERIES OF SPECIFIC POINTS THAT PRESUMABLY WOULD APPEAL TO OTHER SENATORS WHO NOW ARE UNSURE HOW THEY WILL VOTE. THOSE INCLUDE CLEAR UNDERSTANDING THAT IF RANGE OF U.S. CRUISE MISSILES IS LIMITED TO CERTAIN NUMBER OF MILES THAT SOVIETS UNDERSTAND NEED TO ALLOW GREATER PRACTICAL RANGE SO CRUISE CAN FOLLOW AN INDIRECT FLIGHT PATH TO ITS TARGET; SOME ASSURANCE THAT USSR WILL NOT PUT AN ICBM IN MOBILE, LAND-BASED LAUNCHERS THAT ARE USUALLY USED FOR MEDIUM-RANGE MISSILES TARGETED AT EUROPE; AND EXPLICIT ASSURANCE THAT SOVIET UNION WILL COMPLETE DISMANTLING WEAPONS THAT IT WILL HAVE TO GIVE UP UNDER NEW AGREEMENTS WITHIN THREE YEARS OF THEIR SIGNING. SENATE AIDE CRITICAL OF NEW AGREEMENTS TOLD KAISER THAT LETTER "DOES ASK ANY OF HARD QUESTIONS" BUT ONLY ASKS FOR THINGS THREE SENATORS KNOW U.S. IS LIKELY TO GET IN ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS. BUT

SPOKESMAN IN MCINTYRE'S OFFICE INSISTED THAT SENATOR WAS SERIOUSLY CONCERNED ABOUT SPECIFIC ISSUES RAISED WITH CARTER, MOST OF WHICH HAVE COME UP DURING HEARINGS BEFORE HIS SUBCOMMITTEE.

3. NEW YORK TIMES PUBLISHED ASSOCIATED PRESS DISPATCH FROM UPPSALA REPORTING THAT USSR CARRIED OUT ONE OF ITS BIGGEST UNDERGROUND NUCLEAR TESTS OF DECADE WEDNESDAY AT ITS REGULAR PROVING GROUND IN SEMIPALATINSK AREA OF EASTERN KAZAKHSTAN. DR. MARCUS BAATH, HEAD OF SWEDISH SEISMOLOGICAL INSTITUTE SAID "VERY HIGH MAGNITUDE OF EXPLOSION, WHICH MEASURED 6.9 ON RICHTER SCALE, MAKES IT LIKELY THAT LOAD IS IN RANGE OF 150 KILOTONS. IT IS HARD TO TELL WHETHER THIS ONE IS BELOW OR ABOVE CEILING OF 150 KILOTONS
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AS TOO MANY FACTORS ARE INVOLVED. MOST REMARKABLE THING WITH THIS EXPLOSION IS ITS HIGH MAGNITUDE. WE HAVE MEASURED TESTS IN THIS RANGE BEFORE BUT NONE AS POWERFUL..."

4. DREW MIDDLETON OF NEW YORK TIMES SAID USSR, "ACCORDING TO QUALIFIED U.S. INTELLIGENCE SOURCES, HAS VIGOROUSLY ACCELERATED ITS ARMS SALES TO THIRD-WORLD COUNTRIES." HE SAID SOVIET ARMS SALES IN 1976 CAME TO ABOUT 2.5 BILLION DOLLARS, ACCORDING TO CIA STATISTICS. MIDDLETON SAID INTELLIGENCE SOURCES REPORT THAT COUNTRIES IN MIDDLE EAST, AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA ARE PRINCIPAL TARGETS FOR SOVIET ARMS VENDORS WHO ARE OFFERING POTENTIAL BUYERS MOST MODERN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS AND NOT "OUTWORN JUNK." SOVIET UNION IS OFFERING TO SELL MIG-23 FIGHTERS ARMED WITH MOST MODERN AIR-TO-AIR MISSILES, T-62 TANKS, FROG AND SCUD SURFACE-TO-SURFACE MISSILES AND WIDE VARIETY OF ITS LATEST ANTITANK MISSILES AND SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILES. TIMES CORRESPONDENT SAID MOSCOW'S RESISTANCE TO ANY AGREEMENT WITH WASHINGTON ON LIMITING ARMS SALES "IS LINKED PRIMARILY TO SOVIET UNION'S HARD CURRENCY DEFICITS AND ITS NEED TO EARN FOREIGN CURRENCIES TO FINANCE FURTHER PURCHASES OF ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT FROM U.S. AND WESTERN EUROPE." VANCE

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